

FARM HOMES

THE time when we most need our faith is when things look black all around us.—*Anon.*

The Second Chance

(Copyrighted)

NELLIE L. MCCLUNG

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(Continued from last week)

JUST then Bud noticed the little hand-sleigh that he had made for Libby Anne, standing idly behind the stove, and it brought to his eyes a sudden rush of tears—his little girl was dead; the little girl who had loved him. He remembered how she had clung to him that night he came to say good-bye, and begged him to come back, and now, when he came back, there was only the muslin hat and the sleigh and the plaid dress to tell him that he was too late!

Bud retraced his steps sadly to the road and made his way to the school-house, which lay straight on his road home. In his anxiety for Libby Anne he forgot about it being the hour for service. The schoolyard was blown clean and bare. In the woodpile he noticed "shinesticks" where their owners had put them for safe keeping—he knew all the "hide-places," though it was years since he had played "shinney" here. His boyhood seemed separated from him by a wide gulf. Since leaving home he had been to church but seldom, for Bud made the discovery that many another young man makes, that the people who go to church are not people's meetings are not always as friendly as the crowd who frequent the poolrooms and bars. Bud had been hungry for companionship, and he had found it, but in places that did not benefit him morally.

The minister's cutter, in front of the shed, called to his remembrance the fact that this was the hour for service, which no doubt was going on now. "It's a wonder, they still keep it up," he thought, rather contemptuously.

It seemed the most natural thing in the world for him to go into the porch—he would hear what was going on anyway, and perhaps he could see if Mrs. Cavers were there. Suddenly someone began to sing—the voice was strange, and yet familiar, like something he had heard, long, long ago. When he realized that it was Mrs. Cavers he was listening to, a sudden impulse seized him to rush in. Libby Anne must be there, beside her mother—she was always beside her. "Was it for crimes that I have done," He groaned upon the tree?"

Mrs. Cavers was singing alone, it seemed, in her sweet, thin voice. "Oh, no," Bud said to himself, "I guess it was not for any crimes she ever did."

The day had grown darker and colder and now a biting wind began to whirl hard little snowflakes around the porch. Mrs. Cavers sang on: "Well may the sun in darkness hide, And shut its glories in."

When Christ, the mighty Saviour died For man, the creature's sin."

Then he heard Mr. Burrell say, quite distinctly: "Ye that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and

are in love and charity with your neighbours, and intend to lead a new life;—draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort," weekly kneeling upon your knees."

Bud heard a few moving forward—he knew who they were, just the same few—he had gone with them once, more fool he was—what was the use of that man talking about love and charity when the very first chance he got he would turn a fellow down?

"Who in the same night that he was betrayed took bread and broke it, saying: 'Take, eat; this is my body which was broken for you.'"

"This is my blood of the New Testament, which was shed for you."

"This one sentence came out to him



The Comfortable Home of an Eastern Dairyman

There are several features about the home of A. D. Melniss, Stormont Co. Ont. that are worthy of emulation. He has a modern bathroom, hot and cold water in the kitchen and he believes in paint and vine as effective exterior decorations. A fuller description of Mr. Melniss' farm and home may be found on page three of Farm and Dairy this week.

Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

clearly, fastening itself on his mind, and though it was a vague way he heard the service through his mind.

busy with the thought that the Saviour of men had been betrayed by a friend, betrayed to His death, and had died blessing and forgiving his enemies.

"... the same night that he was betrayed."

The solemnity of it fell on the boy's heart. He had knelt there once, and heard those words and taken the tokens of the Lord's death, with his heart swelling with love for Him who had not even refused to die. It had been a glorious day of June sunshine, when through the open window came the robin's song and the prairie breeze laden with the perfume of wolf-willow blossoms and sweet-grass. He remembered how the tears had risen unbidden to his eyes—happy tears of love and loyalty—and he had felt that

nothing could ever separate him from the Master whom he loved. But now he stood on the outside of the door—he was an outsider—he had no part in this. He made a step backward—there was no danger of anyone coming out—everyone stayed for the whole service, he knew, even if they didn't take part.

"Our Father, who art in heaven," he heard them all repeat, and quite unconsciously he began to follow the words with them. It was like an old friend coming out to meet him.

"Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us."

Bud stopped abruptly, he couldn't say that—he would not forgive—he had been bitterly wronged, and he would never forgive—he had done what was right, and what had he got for it? He tried to summon back to him the anger that had kept alive his resolve to stay away from home. Instead of anger and bitterness he found his heart swelling with the old love for the One who, the same night that he was betrayed, took bread and broke it, saying, "Take, eat; this is my body which was broken for you."

Some one was praying—it was Mr. Burrell—every word came to Bud clearly.

"Dear Lord," the minister prayed, "be one with us to-day and grant that the great appeal which Thou dost

aise, where he clasped a black-headed youth in his arms. For a full minute no one spoke; then Rodrick Ray, the Scottish Covenantor, broke into singing:

"O dying Lamb, Thy precious blood Shall never lose its power Till all the ransomed church of God Be saved to sin no more."

What a scene of rejoicing was in the schoolhouse that dark March day! Rodrick Ray slapped Bud on the back again and again, crying, "Wonderful! Wonderful! Mr. Perkins hung on to Bud's arm as if he were afraid he might lose him again, and told him over and over again what a time he had been having with him. "There's nothing like your own, you bet." Even George Swainman shook hands with Bud, and told him he was glad to see him back again.

While Mrs. Cavers, in answer to his eager inquiry, was telling Bud of her anger against Libby Anne's illness, and the great kindness of his father and mother, and the great kindness of Mr. Perkins, who had helped to clear up Bud's name and that what plugging. Tell them she did it." In the excitement of the moment there was no room anything in the suggestion. Bud was so shrewd enough to know that the psychological moment had come.

Mr. Burrell was still standing with his hand on Bud's shoulder, as if he could never let go of him. He whispered to the minister to ask the people to sit down for a few minutes, for Mr. Perkins had something to say to them. Mr. Burrell did as he had asked him. Then Mr. Perkins addressed a few words to the congregation which were probably as strange a closing as any sacramental service has ever had.

"Well, friends," he said, "I believe I have a few words to say. I should have said them before, I guess, in fact, I should have said them when the thing happened, but I'm a terrible man to put off things that I don't like to do. But I'm so glad to get Buddie home that I don't mind telling you that he didn't have nothing to do with that wheat plugging—that was my idea entirely—in fact, Bud raised Cain about us ever plugging grain, and said he'd not stand for it any more. I ain't much used to speaking in church, as you know. I've always kept my religion in my wife's name, and I may not be talking in a suitable way at all. I'm a good deal like old Jimmie Miller was at a funeral one time. Jimmie had a glass of two too much, and just when the minister asked them to walk around and view the remains, old Jimmie jumped up and proposed the health of the bride and groom. Well, of course, some one grabbed him and pulled him down, and says: 'Sit down, man, this is a funeral.' Well, says Jimmie, speakin' pretty thick, 'I don't care what it is, but it's a very successful event any way.' That's the way I feel—it's the happiest day I've known for quite a while." Thomas Perkins suddenly stopped speaking at chief. The neighbours, looking at him in surprise, realized that there was strong emotion behind his lightly spoken words.

(Continued next week)

Train the children to be clean in when they grow up and have homes of their own they will not forget the lessons taught them in their youth. If they are neglected in their youth, as amount of work in after life will bring them to grief.

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The Up...

Doing Co...

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